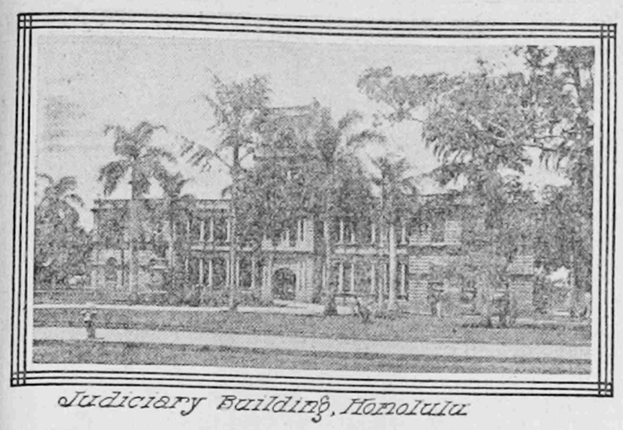
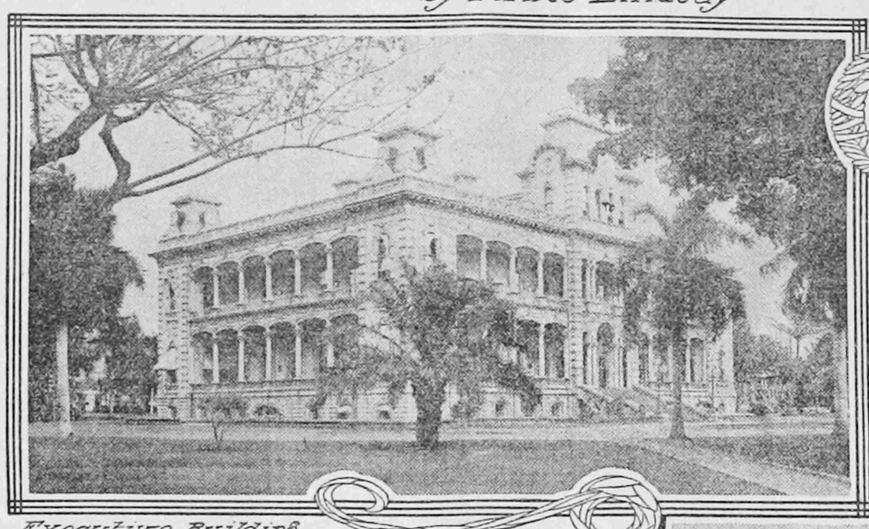
HAWAII for the HOME SEEKER

A. Y. H.

By Forbes Lindsay



Judiciary Building, Honolulu



Executive Building, Honolulu, formerly Palace of King Kalakana

Driveway to a Private Residence

Public School Building, Honolulu

MR. F. H. NEWELL, director of the United States Reclamation Service, after an extensive investigation of conditions in Hawaii, made about a year ago, expressed himself in his official report as follows: "The supreme need of the islands from the viewpoint of the national interest is that of increasing the number of citizens owning homes upon the land. The relatively great proportion of laborers who are not citizens, and the fact that there is such a small number of citizens who are landowners and who have been brought up under democratic institutions, forms a source of weakness. Every possible effort should be made by public and private interests to put upon the land the best obtainable men, who will live upon small farms, cultivate the soil and become independent, self-respecting citizens. This need has long been recognized; many attempts to remedy it have been made, but most of these have not been successful, owing to a variety of reasons."

It must be confessed that conditions in the past have not been favorable to the settler with small means. If he secured land contiguous to a sugar estate he could readily dispose of his output to the mill at a fair profit, but the almost invariable outcome was the acquisition of his property by the company. In case he devoted his holding to coffee, pineapples or any one of the score of crops that may be successfully raised on Hawaiian soil, he experienced difficulty in transporting his product and in marketing it. To such an extent was the interest of the islanders centered in sugar that until recent years little attention was paid to anything else, although it is a fact beyond dispute that many other forms of agriculture yield handsome returns even though carried on in a small way.

Practically all the farming that is carried on in Hawaii depends upon the Chinese. The Kanakas are averse to agricultural pursuits and have even abandoned the cultivation of taro to the Chinese, who also extensively engage in truck gardening. Taro was at one time the chief source of the native food supply, and at the present is largely consumed by them. It is a plant with six or eight tall, thick stems, each surmounted by a broad leaf, like that of a water lily, and all growing from a central root. It yields a pulp from which poi, the favorite dish of the Kanakas, is made.

One of the chief obstacles to the establishment of small farms in Hawaii is the high price of lands. A large proportion of the cultivatable lands is in private ownership, having been acquired by favored American and British families through royal grants. The Bishop Estate owns nearly 10 per cent. of the entire land area of the islands. The sugar plantations have acquired the best tracts on all the islands. Little is to be had upon the windward side, and on the leeward side the necessity of irrigation precludes the location of the man of moderate means. The government is constantly offering public lands in small subdivisions, but the best of these opportunities are quickly seized by residents of the islands, who seldom cultivate them, but contrive to evade the requirements of the Homestead Law and sell out as soon as they obtain title. Renting is out of the question for the white farmer. He could not pay the price that the Chinaman will—$8 or $10 an acre—and make a living.

A solution to these difficulties seems to have been found in the project of the national government to reclaim certain sections of the public land. It is proposed to employ the Reclamation Service in this development, and it is believed that the venture will meet with the success that has attended all the projects of the bureau in the regions of the West.

When these homesteads are offered to our mainland farmers there should be no lack of applicants for them. Hawaii has many unsurpassable attractions for the home-seeker. There is no better climate in the world. The educational facilities are excellent. The settlers on these tracts will form American communities. Transportation facilities will be assured to them, and their aggregate production will be sufficiently important to command the attention of shippers and buyers. In short, where individuals and small groups have failed a compact community of a few thousand may succeed with ordinary effort.

The settler in Hawaii will have no difficulty in finding desirable crops to raise. The land is suited to the growth of a great variety of tropical and semi-tropical plants, for several of which there is a steady demand. It is probable that a few small cultivators acting in co-operation could make a good thing out of rice, although they would be subject to the disagreeable necessity of working in marsh land. At present the industry is entirely in the hands of the Chinese. The annual production has a value of $2,500,000, but it falls far short of the demand. About 10,000 acres are devoted to the cereal. Two crops a year are harvested, and the yield of an acre is from $200 to $300 in value. All the work is performed by hand or with the use of the most primitive machinery. The rate of rental of these lands runs as high as $50 an acre, including water supply.

Various tropical and semitropical fruits are successfully grown in Hawaii by easy cultivation. Cocoanuts, mangoes, oranges, alligator pears, lemons and grapes meet with a ready sale. In the uplands apples, plums and similar fruits of the temperate zone thrive. Small quantities of rubber, tobacco and vanilla are produced, and the investigations of the experiment station promise future success in these directions. The market for hay and other forage crops is constant and equal to a much larger supply. These are all, excepting rubber, products which the small farmer may cultivate with profit.

It is generally agreed that the cultivation of pineapples offers the best opportunity to the white settler. The industry is comparatively recent in its birth, but has already grown to important dimensions. There are about a dozen canneries in the territory and approximately 6,000 acres devoted to the fruit. The total output is 17,000 tons, valued at $1,250,000. The industry is mainly conducted by small corporations, but about 7 per cent. of the pineapple crops is raised by independent Japanese.

For many years it has been believed that coffee has had its days in Hawaii and that the islands are not adapted to its best growth. Prolonged experiments have proved that previous failures were due to improper methods of cultivation and injudicious selection of locations for planting. With better knowledge the industry is reviving and bids fair to expand to considerable proportions. About 4,500 acres are now in bearing trees, producing a crop of about 1,500 tons, valued at $300,000. The berry is of excellent quality and is beginning to be favorably regarded in the markets of the mainland. The small capitalist with some knowledge of coffee culture may find a good field for his efforts in Hawaii.

Great expectations are entertained of the sisal industry in the islands. The plant requires little water and will grow well on stony ground that can be turned to no other account. There are extensive waste lands in Hawaii which can be made to yield crops of sisal without irrigation or fertilization. The Hawaiian fiber is especially excellent in quality and commands a higher price than the best product of Yucatan. Several small mills are engaged in extracting the fiber and constant improvements are being made in the mechanical devices for the purpose. There are about 500,000 acres of land in the territory capable of producing sisal, but of little value otherwise. This area if devoted to the plant would produce 150,000 tons annually, which, at six cents a pound, the current price of sisal, would aggregate $18,000,000 in value.

The experiment station has carried on a series of tests for several years past in connection with tobacco. The conclusions reached indicate good prospects for the successful cultivation of this weed of universal demand. It is believed that there are about 125,000 acres of land suitable to tobacco in the territory. It is not safe, however, to recommend tobacco growing in Hawaii to the small capitalist as yet. The right kind of land will probably be costly and the experiments have not yet been carried to the point of determining with anything like precision the cost of cultivation. This, like vanilla, is one of the products that the farmer may experiment with to possible advantage.

Only such crops have been noticed as may be raised by the man with a small acreage and little money at his command. They are sufficiently numerous and diversified to insure success with ordinary labor and intelligent method.

Throughout the entire country the density of the population is a little over 25 persons to each square mile.

Ventilating Fans May Prove Dangerous.

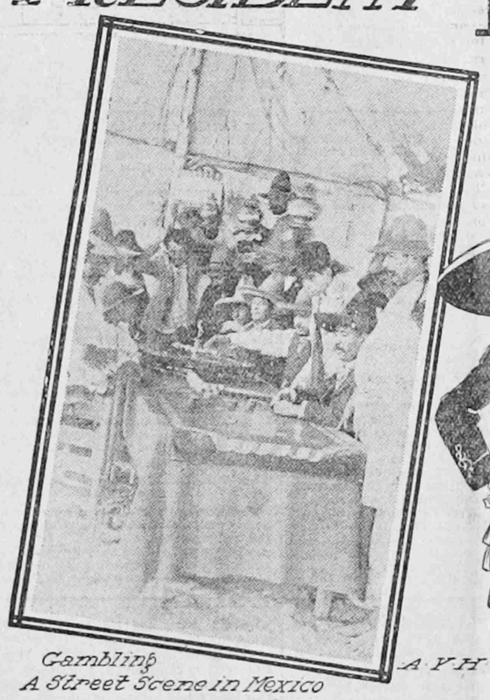
THE French government assumes nowadays a most paternal interest in the welfare and general health of its working people. So the government not long ago ordered two officials to study the actions of ventilating fans in big factories and other establishments where many workingmen were crowded together and breathed air that was supplied largely by big machine fans working through giant ventilating apparatus. These gentlemen have reported back to the French cabinet that in most instances the fans used in French factories have not only no utility for the good of the workmen, but that, on the contrary, they create in the premises where they are placed a veritable whirlwind that raises constantly a cloud of almost invisible dust, which in itself is injurious to the human lungs. They also add that where one workman is suffering from tuberculosis the ventilating fans spread the contagion of these germs as perfectly as if they had been invented for no other purpose.

These officials claim in their government report that all fans should be abolished that do not draw their air supply entirely from outside the building and high above the street level. Also they recommend that the apparatus be so perfected that the workingmen are protected from dust by filters that strain the air currents of all dust before it is permitted to enter the working rooms of the factory mill or big store.

A Home in the Hot Country, the House of Adobe and the Roof of Grasses and Straw

PRESIDENT DIAZ' QUEER COUNTRY

by K. L. Smith



Gambling A Street Scene in Mexico

A. Y. H.

Making Tortillas

A Mexican Beast of Burden-A Cargador

WHEN President Taft meets the President of Mexico this month he will not only shake hands with a wonderful man, but with one who has ruled almost continuously since 1876. Porfirio Diaz is a capable man, and his presidency in Mexico has been conducted in such a way that the country has steadily progressed. Few kings and no presidents have held a more consecutive record than Diaz, and, though he has his enemies as well as friends, he stands head and shoulders above other Mexican politicians. He has been in favor of educating the masses, has encouraged foreigners to make investments, had built railroads, established manufactures and brought his country to a place where it is receiving recognition from the rest of the world. Americans think that his protracted rule, while it might not have served in our country, is just the thing for this Southern land, where nothing is done as in the United States.

The Rio Grande is a small stream, yet once across it another world dawns on the American. One dollar of our money is worth two dollars in Mexican money, and all railroad measurements are kilometers instead of miles. One never buys a yard of goods in a store, but a meter, which equals a yard and a tenth. This seems odd enough to the "Americano," but it is the street cars that interest him the most. It seems incongruous to see a tram car, antiquated though it may be, passing through narrow, precipitous streets of places that antedate Columbus' advent. The tracks are irregular, and nine times out of ten the car, which may be a second-hand one brought down from "the States," is a mule car driven by a man who is dressed in rags, with a torn sombrero on his head and a faded zerape thrown artistically over his left shoulder. On his feet he wears leather sandals, provided he is fortunate enough to have a foot covering, and in his hand he wields a long quirt with which he lashes the mule.

The Mexican mule is a remarkable animal, homely but faithful, and once started seems as loath to stop as it was unwilling to go before starting into action. Over the narrow streets goes the car, the women peeping at it from behind the barred windows of their homes and the driver alternately blowing a tin horn, calling out "Audele, audele" and sh-sh-sh to his beast. This last peculiar sound, made through the teeth, is so common in Mexico that the very air seems filled with it. It is also used to "shoo" a person out of the way and takes the place of our "get up." By some secret understanding it is comprehended by the mule, who "gets up" either by going forward or backward.

There are first and second class cars, as on the railroads, though the latter go one extreme further and furnish third-class coaches. The fare is very little—about three cents a mile in the first-class—and after the conductor sells the tickets innumerable collectors appear to punch them at about every block. In this strange country where lotteries are so prevalent and gambling so common the street car tickets in many places are lottery tickets, and a printed notice on the back of these slips suggests that it be kept to see if it does not draw something. Many people watch these numbers, and others make a practice of collecting old street car tickets and noticing the numbers when the lottery takes place at the beginning of the month. In this land of contrasts a familiar sight is the funeral car with raised dais and catafalque beneath a canopy supplemented by a cross. These funeral cars are painted black or white, and differ in decorations and consequent expense. Sometimes the funeral car of a poor person has no decorations, the black casket exposed to view is without flowers and no mourners follow; but the middle classes engage a better funeral car and attach it to one or more ordinary cars with closely drawn curtains and the word "Especial" on the side. So popular is this method that I have counted 11 funeral cars in one hour passing the large zocale or public square in Mexico City.

All this strikes the newcomer as odd and he may hasten to his hotel only to find that if it possesses an elevator—which is quite improbable—it runs certain hours of the day instead of continuously and the heavy entrance doors to the court are barred after a given time at night. As a rule the hotels are poor, but in some of the stylish resorts there are hotels and restaurants that compare favorably with those in the States. These are usually kept by some enterprising American, who leaves just enough of the Mexican attractions in the way of beautiful patio, filled with flowers and splashing fountains, to keep the Mexican atmosphere, and adds to it our up-to-date methods of living and a dash of American dishes interspersed with Mexican condiments. On arrival the guest is shown his room and if he agrees to stay his name, with the number of his room added, is entered on a huge blackboard which fills one side of the office wall. The proprietor from then on pays little attention to his guest, who must not expect to have pen, ink and paper in his room, but must write any missive in the office, and who receives his key from a man who, after once seeing him, is as unfailing in his recognition and in giving the correct key as the major domo of hats at the door of a hotel dining-room in the States. Sometimes mail is left with this individual, but more often it is thrown on the desk of the proprietor for anyone to pick out at his discretion. Locks and keys are an innovation and the man chambermaid, who is also hallboy, newsboy and bootblack, usually offers to show the newcomer how to lock the door with every appearance of imparting valuable information.

One can get a comfortable meal in the large Mexican restaurants because the head waiter usually speaks English. Whether the menu be in French or Spanish, he approaches and in an obsequious manner says in "Americano," "We have so and so," "The spaghetti is very nice today," or asks the guest to point out what he wants on the bill of fare. This he jots down in Spanish and hands to the waiter. Unlike the quiet of our well-ordered establishments, a great sputtering and talking goes on continually between the major domo and his subordinates, and when the language is not understood one heaves a sigh of relief to see them finally resolve into smiles, and the wild gestures and hissing sounds cease. In many of these places smoking is permitted, and though the Mexicans are extremely punctilious, never drain a glass or neglect to say "Gracias" and are polite in many little ways that we neglect, well-bred men will smoke in the main body of the street car.

They are nappy people, these neighbors of ours, and even the lower classes, though burdened with poverty and dressed in rags and tatters, find pleasure in life. Sometimes in the tierra caliente or hot country the children run around with no clothing. Fortunately, these people desire less than those of the same station in life in the States; they are not filled with ambition to become rich, and they accept unquestionably many conditions that we would rebel at. Their voices are low and pleasant and the street calls, with which the air is filled, are musical and command attention. "Gorditas de horno," calls the vendor of hot cakes, and in answering notes comes "Toman nues?" or "Will you have nuts?" but no sane American wants to buy them. The street vendors are dirty and the flies congregate in millions about their wares.

On the other hand, everyone who goes to the land of white umbrellas desires to taste the national dishes, and unless he is fortunate enough to be invited to the home of a Mexican of the upper class, and they are very exclusive, he must take his chances as to where they are prepared. Tortillas are a favorite dish, as common as our bread. Women make them by the roadside, in empty cars and in their kitchen; no place seems too inconvenient and the process never varies. These small cakes resemble our pancakes. They are made of ground corn and water and baked flat on small pieces of sheet iron over a brazier. The tortilla maker usually kneels on the ground and has before her a small inclined mortar of sandstone. The part near her body is higher than that resting on the ground. It looks like a sandstone washboard, and on this she throws handfuls of corn from a basket by her side. She sprinkles this with water obtained by dipping her hand in a gourd holding this precious fluid—for water is treated like milk in our country and is never wasted. This mass the tortilla maker rolls up and down on the mortar board, crushing it as she does so with a sandstone rolling-pin. When of the consistency of meal she pats it into small, thin cakes and if there is a child present, and there always is, she hands it to the little one, who continues to flatten it between hands that are too often dirty. It is then placed on the iron slab over two or three pieces of charcoal, which are cherished carefully. The tortillas are turned with the hands and when brown are eaten like bread or used to dip up the frijoles or beans which boil in a pot placed with its side against the fire.

These are common roadside sights. Even the better class of Mexicans, who are particular in the preparation of food, seldom cook over anything but a brazier, and only on rare occasions learn to make cake or pies. It is the life of the people that interests most in this country, with its Italian blue sky and its tropical green. It is the peons who really constitute Mexican life. As a rule, they are small in stature and they do not live to be old. This is partly due to the immense burdens they carry and to unsanitary lives. In fact, it is an exception to see a white-haired Mexican, and when one does he is a striking object, his dusky skin forming a marked contrast to his gray locks. As elsewhere, the soul of the artist is delighted, and there are few countries that can give more material for brush and pencil. Beside the artistic old adobe houses, with their fronts of green, blue, red or white, it seems impossible for the average Mexican to be awkward. Unconsciously he assumes graceful attitudes, whether wetting his lips over the counter of a pulque shop or hawking his wares. He never hurries and he is pleasing in his movements, though his clothes be of the scantiest and his torn sombrero is stretched out in his hands for stray centavos.

Science Now Declares Stupid Children Are Deaf.

RECENT reports made by the eminent scientists in charge of watching the health conditions in Parisian schools declare unqualifiedly that nearly all the children marked down as naughty pupils or poor scholars are actually sufferers from deafness. The physicians claim that these dull scholars and inattentive students are really the victims of deafness and breathing through the mouth.

This amounts to saying that the nasal passages of the children are more or less clogged with diseased tissue and that their dulness and lack of interest in their school work is really caused by the fact that they are unable to hear well what is taught to them.

Of 400 pupils in one school the physicians made elaborate tests and carefully kept the statistics thus gathered. In 60 per cent. the breathing was healthy, in 20 per cent. the breathing was bad and in the last 20 per cent. the nose was actually plugged up and the children were forced to breath exclusively through the mouth. Of the children 150 were deaf.

Of the children who had good hearing and breathing apparatus only one in five had a poor mark in school, while of the children who breathed through the nose two out of three had a bad mark and were put down as not studying or as being stupid at their books.

Finally the physicians found that in these 400 students selected at random two-thirds of all the children who were said to be stupid were in bad health, while in children who breathed properly through the nose only one in five had been marked on the school books as losing any time on account of illness.

This means, say the French school physicians, that when a child breathes through the mouth that its nose is stopped up by disease and that the child not only suffers from deafness, but also from illness due to improper breathing apparatus. Also the vast majority of school children put down as bad or as stupid are really suffering only from the stupid neglect of their parents and guardians who have not yet learned that when a child is forced to breathe through the mouth it has only one chance of success in life against five chances held out to the lucky child that can breathe in the manner nature intended—that is, through both nostrils in the human noses and not through the mouth, which nature regards as exclusively for eating and talking—not for breathing.

Dangers in Animal Tuberculosis.

THREE royal commissions have reported to the British government on various phases of the tuberculosis danger since 1901, when Koch made his first pronouncement concerning the terrible possibilities contained in animals suffering from the disease. One royal British commission reported in 1904, another in 1907 (called the Second Interim Report) and the third and last report was made public this year.

This third interim report details the work and observations of a dozen of the most famous English physicians. The work consisted in attempting to demonstrate the dangers incurred from cows infected by a natural method. The facts given as to the possibility of human infection from the diseased cow are most alarming.

None of the cows studied gave any signs of disease that could be detected without some special scientific investigation. The most important practical discovery was absolute proof that the dirt and filth in a badly kept stable contained tremendous amounts of the germs. Moreover, it was shown that a badly kept stable invariably turns out milk infected with the dirt from the stable itself.

In other words this result of two years hard work by some of the best-known scientists in England proves one important fact, namely, that tuberculosis in cows is 100 times more dangerous to milk consumers when the diseased cows are kept in unsanitary stables. Naturally enough, the important recommendation to the British government by the commission is a demand for instant and severe revision of sanitation laws over stables where cows are housed. This is expected to result in new and scientific supervision over cow stables throughout the entire United Kingdom.